

REMARKS

Claims 1-9, 11, 12, and 14-21 are currently pending in the application. By the present amendment, the claims 1-4, 12 and 21 are canceled and claims 5, 11, 14-17, and 20 are amended. In particular, dependent claims 5, 11 and 14-17 have been amended to depend from allowed claims 19 or 20. No new matter has been added to the specification or the claims with these amendments.

Applicants acknowledge with thanks the Examiner's determination of allowable subject matter in claim 19. Claims 5, 16 and 17 have been amended to depend from claim 19. It is also noted with appreciation that claim 20 has been indicated as allowable if amended to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112 second paragraph. By the present amendment, claim 20 has been amended to overcome the 35 U.S.C. § 112 rejection. Claims 11, 14, and 15 have been amended to depend from claim 20. It is submitted that these claims, and any claims dependent thereon, are allowable.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

In the Office Action, claim 16 is objected to for informalities cited by the Examiner. Claim 16 has been amended to correct the informality pointed out by the Examiner.

CLAIM REJECTIONS-35 U.S.C. § 112

In the Office Action, claims 16 and 20-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subjected matter which the Applicants regard as the invention. This rejection is respectfully traversed. The several items cited by the Examiner in this rejection have been attended to by the amendment of these claims.

CLAIM REJECTIONS-35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 12 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,307,538 to Rench et al. (Rench). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Claims 1

and 12 has been cancelled and claim 14 has been amended to depend from claim 20, which applicants believe to be in condition for allowance. It is thus believed that the rejection is moot.

CLAIM REJECTIONS-35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 11-12, 14-18 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,524,321 to Weaver et al. (Weaver) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,146,434 to Scalfani et al. (Scalfani). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Claims 1, 12, and 21 have been cancelled. Claims 11, 14 and 15 have been amended to depend from claim 20, which applicants believe to be in condition for allowance. Claims 16 and 17 have been amended to depend from allowed claim 19 and claim 18 now depends indirectly from claim 19. It is thus believed that the rejection is moot.

Claims 2 and 3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Weaver in view of Scalfani as applied to claim 1 and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,536,072. Thur et al. (Thur). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Claims 2 and 3 have been cancelled and therefore the rejection is moot.

Claims 15 and 17-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rench as applied to claim 1 and further in view of Weaver. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Claims 15 has been amended to depend from claim 20, which applicants believe to be in condition for allowance. Claim 17 has been amended to depend from allowed claim 19 and claim 18 now depends indirectly from claim 19. It is thus believed that the rejection is moot.

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In view of the foregoing remarks and amendments, it is submitted that all of the claims are in condition for allowance. Early notification of allowability is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

DAVID E. MCDOWELL ET AL.

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By: /John E McGarry/
John E. McGarry, Reg. No. 22,360
MCGARRY BAIR PC
171 Monroe Avenue, NW, Suite 600
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503
616-742-3500

G0254789